

moment, soon to arrive, when interest in the work or individual can or must cease, is an *injurious distraction* that can do naught but lower the standard of attention required and lessen the amount of knowledge to be acquired. That such results have occurred is borne out by the statements of several directresses, one of whom cited an instance where a student nurse, in the midst of a critical operation, turned to the surgical nurse and called attention to the fact that it was time for her to go off duty. An expression of this character, isolated, I hope, not only indicates the attitude of the student nurse who is willing to assert the fact, but probably typifies the unexpressed thought of many others less assertive. With such a thought dominating the mind, how much knowledge is acquired? how much care taken of the patient? especially if a theater appointment with some one has been made upon the given hour.

Have the student nurses' hours been unduly long? From 7 a. m. to 7 p. m. with two hours each day and one hour off for meals; four hours off on Sundays and one-half day each week, which has been the schedule of general duty for day work, and while many hours may have meant unpleasant, fatiguing work, there have been as many hours of light, easy, and pleasant work as well. From 7 p. m. to 7 a. m. for one or two months, and all half days counted and given as off time, has been the schedule for night duty. A time when the majority of duties were almost perfunctory, a period that in the greatest number of cases meant only careful watching, while the mind of the student was being regaled by the effusions of some popular author or perhaps devoted to study—so far, where is the apparent necessity of shortening the hours so that the health of the "mothers of the future" may be preserved?

Admitting that eight hours is a sufficient number in which to do the work of the usual day, the criticism I make of this law is that it refuses permission to do the work *required or necessary* if that task cannot be done in eight hours.

To the layman, no reason appears why a patient should not receive the ministrations of four different nurses on special duty and many more on general duty in every 24 hours. A strict compliance with the law would compel that situation. We all know that as a rule one who is ill desires and should have as few persons as possible in attendance upon their wants. This is especially true of sick people whose illness or modesty prompts a degree of shrinking from intimacy with strangers. And there are few physicians who would not, because of mental disturbances of the patient, contend against this arrangement. It will not do to counter these suggestions with the assertion that if graduate nurses were employed no such condition would result. The conduct of a hospital is inseparably connected with the average ability of its patients to pay the expense, and its method of operation must be controlled with those facts in mind.

Those who conduct the hospital are certainly entitled to some return for their labor and upon their investment. If they conduct charity beds,

such must be charged to expense. The student nurses receive instructions from, as a rule, especially paid instructors, board, lodging, and laundry free, and a small sum in cash each month. And to these items add all the usual cost of hospital operation, and then add the expense naturally attendant upon increasing the number of student or graduate nurses so as to perform the work and obey the law, and I warrant that no hospital in this state will survive if it maintains a *reasonable schedule of charges* within the reach of the person of ordinary means.

No doubt this prediction will be denied—but time will show—if the law is eventually obeyed, whether it is justified. Our hospitals cannot be regulated or managed upon the basis of the eastern hospitals, where it is the usual thing to find an endowment fund working night and day to assist in meeting the expense. In California, but a few are so fortunate, and they may weather the storm, but the others will sustain the full effect.

Another feature of it that marks a wide difference between our hospitals and those in the eastern states, is that ours are much smaller in capacity. In theirs, during any hour, because of the great number of patients, a student has opportunity for observing a crisis and receiving instruction in handling the case through the period. There student nurses are on duty eight hours daily, 56 hours per week, and 12 hours night duty, and in the small hospitals do special duty more for purposes of instruction; but here, our small hospitals with few patients, the quitting hour may come at a time to prevent this observation and instruction, and to one who really wishes to perfect herself in the nursing profession, no chance should be lost in acquiring by observation, study, and contact all possible knowledge.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Anatomy and Physiology for Nurses.** By Amy G. Pope. 8vo, linen, pp. 554, illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, Publishers. Price \$1.75.

This is a good book, concise, explicit and practical. In the chapter on the Spinal Cord some explanation of lumbar puncture might not be out of place. The illustrations are not too numerous, clear and useful.

L. E.

**Guiding Principles in Surgical Practice.** By Frederick-Emil Neef, B. S., M. L., M. D., Adjunct Professor of Gynecology, Fordham University School of Medicine, New York City. Sextodecimo; 180 pages. Surgery Publishing Co., New York. Price, Cloth, \$1.50.

In this little monograph Doctor Neef has given us a little work that is worth the perusal of every one that enters the operating room. While the operating room methods are but briefly described and do not even partially cover the field of general surgery, there is much that can be read with benefit to both surgeon and patient. The little chapter on wound healing is exceptionally clear and good, as is the part devoted to sterilization of the operative field, the instruments and the surgeon's hands. There is a lot of sound advice and good reasoning contained in this little book and it